(b) Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with the neighbouring countries are for increase in trade. Necessary incentives have been provided by the Government to the domestic consumer electronics industry to take advantage of FTAs.

(c) Some multinational consumer durable firms have cut down manufacturing operations in India because of competition from the indigenous industry.

Common currency for South Asia

3131. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any progress on the idea of Common Currency for South Asia as mooted by the previous Government;

(b) if so, what has been the response of other SAARC member nations in this regard;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter on bilateral basis and also under the aegis of the SAARC; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) In his Statement at the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad, January 4-6,2004, the Indian Prime Minister had referred to the goal of a common currency for our region. However, no subsequent discussions on this issue have taken place, either bilaterally, or under the aegis of SAARC.

Pakistan help to Nepal

3132. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the visiting Pakistani official delegation to Nepal has offered military aid to Nepal to fight the Maoist insurgents; and

(b) if so, what is the response of Government thereto?